

Town of Edmonston
Town Council Work Session Meeting
Tuesday, January 4, 2022, 7:00 P.M. (Via Zoom Teleconference)

1. Mayor Gant called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and teleconference attendees were Council Members, Hilary Chester, Betsy McCauley, John Johnson and Sarah Turberville, Town Administrator Rod Barnes, Town Clerk Averil Gray, and Police Chief Elliott Gibson Sr.
2. Review Agenda for January 12th Regular Council Meeting
3. Discussion of status of research on Electronic Signs ensued. Council Member McCauley asked about cost difference in stationary versus mobile signs and Council Member Chester if ones sourced by solar power, was an option. Town Administrator Barnes indicated moveable signs are \$16K and upwards and the stationary at Sunoco/Town Hall are \$23K. There will be further research to determine power source options.
4. Discussion concerning use of Recovery Act Funds ensued starting with implementing grants to residents for flood mitigation efforts and to begin defining the process involved. Council believes homeowners should have flood insurance to qualify for the grant. Council Member McCauley indicated the cost estimate is \$800 - \$1,000 a year. Council Member Turberville indicated insurance requirements might be cost prohibitive for residents and should not necessarily be criteria for the receipt of grant dollars. Mayor Gant suggested as a starting point, identify insurance companies with flood policies to present information to Town residents. Another suggestion is for residents to attend a series of workshops educating them on flood mitigation as a prerequisite for grant dollars in the maximum proposed amount of \$2,500. Council suggested providing an insurance provider list of County qualified registered vendors. Council Member Turberville cautioned that prerequisites should not be burdensome for residents nor for staff to manage the record-keeping of participation. She suggested providing each participating homeowner a flood audit evaluation as a cost the Town absorbs. Council Member McCauley recommended residents complete at least one workshop. Council Member Chester suggested residents complete a combination of workshops depending on the issues found at that home. Council will continue discussion on the plan, specific workshop topics and streamlining the process.

The conversation turned to renters in the town and what could be provided from Recovery Act funding. Council Member McCauley suggested paying renter insurance for a year and Council agreed to explore this idea. Town Administrator Barnes will get a review on renters' insurance to see if its payment meets requirements for use of funds.

Town Administrator Barnes shared proposal on expansion of broadband in the Town as another use of Recovery Act Funds with plans to initiate Wi-Fi connection in the recreation center and "hot spots" in areas around the community such as Veteran's Park.

Council briefly discussed ongoing work by WSSC and communication to residents. As WSSC emails the Town notices of work status that information is updated and put on the Town's website. If WSSC provides notice of road closures or emergency work, the Town sends out via Constant Contact and Facebook. In addition, the 2021 fall and winter newsletters provided residents details on the scope of work and points of contact for further information.

Council discussed measures the Town is taking with the increase spread of the Covid variant. One change is eliminating the acceptance of cash payments, requiring credit card or money orders instead. Chief Gibson will provide a protocol update to staff. Mayor Gant indicated the County Executive's office will get Covid-testing kits and a Zoom call about the distribution of kits is upcoming.

5. Mayor Gant adjourned the work session at 8:45 p.m.

Tracy R. Gant, Mayor

Averi Gray, Town Clerk